

6. Carnival in Aruba: "A Feast of Yourself"

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The heat begins, we goin' jam and sing
Its carnival, lots of bacchanal
Jouvert morning we goin' grind, grind, grind
Break a day, carnival all the way.

I feel so crazy, don't look for me
I too busy, busy
It's carnival, we don't give a damn
Drums them beating, bradam, bradam
—MIGHTY HEADS

The official start of Aruba's pre-Lenten Carnival is the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month (the Fool's magic hour). Public festivities begin after the New Year with the evening Torch Parade (known in Dutch as the *fakkeloptocht*). Costumed *carnavalistas* carry flaming torches through the streets of the capital, Oranjestad—jamming and wining to the music of Asambeho brassbands, disco vans, and live music bands. The torches symbolize the heat generated by the festivities—several weeks of competitions, parties and parades that take place all over the island.¹

Aruba's Carnival is a time for excess, fun, and self-indulgence stretching from mid-January to the beginning of Lent. The festival marks the pre-Lenten season for Catholics, picks up the slack between Christmas and Easter for commerce, and provides a celebratory opening of the new year for everyone. In Aruba, this time is known also as the "hot season." This does not refer to the climate, but rather to the fever generated by the celebrations. The island "cools down" on the eve of Ash Wednesday with the fiery sacrifice of Momo, the Spirit of Carnival.

Carnival in Aruba has been called "a feast of yourself"²—a phrase that signifies the deeper meaning of the festival as participants explore, reinvent, and elaborate themselves for representation to the outside world. For these *carnavalistas*, the Carnival is indeed a feast—a glorious, indulgent celebration of ethnic identities.

This chapter describes the origins and structure of the Aruba Carnival and explores the way in which it provides a frame for the construction, display, and play of island identities. Trinidadians who came to work at the American-owned oil refinery in the early 1940s introduced the Carnival into Aruba. With no public carnival of their own, Arubians embraced the festival with enthusiasm and striking creativity. In the decades since, although retaining many of the original masquerades and competitions, continuing immigrations and transnational flows have gradually introduced features from other carnivals into the celebrations, especially those of Venezuela, Brazil, Holland, and North America. Of more significance for this paper, however, is the way in which the Carnival has been consciously appropriated and nativized by the native Arubians.

Aruba still maintains a significant, but much diminished, British West Indian community, some of whom assert that their Carnival was “stolen” by native Arubians. Even after fifty years of capable management under the native Arubians, some older British West Indian mas players still dispute their ability to run the festival because “they do not have Carnival in their blood.” The Arubians strongly counter this by asserting that Carnival is an Arubian thing—a generation of children has grown up within the festival’s embrace, and therefore it *is* in their blood.

THE PAST IN BRIEF

Some historical background is needed to understand why the relationship between native Arubians and the English has been competitive and antagonistic since the 1940s. Of central importance is the way insiders and outsiders of Aruba are constructed around notions of relative indigeneity as well as around the question of who has the right to control and represent Aruba’s cultural history and resources—including the Carnival.

Aruba is a Dutch Caribbean island situated off the northern shores of Venezuela. Its spheres of cultural influence include the Caribbean, Europe, North America, and Latin America. First the Ciboney, then the Caiquetio and Jirajara Arawaks, settled from the nearby Paraguayan peninsula. The Spanish arrived after 1499, but were ousted by the Dutch in 1636. In the centuries that followed, a diversity of immigrants arrived as farmers, laborers, and merchants, including Sephardic Jews from Curacao, Venezuelans, Colombians, Portuguese, and Europeans. Some later settlers brought African slaves with them to work as house servants (Aruba had no large plantations). Over time, these settlers intermarried with the Indians, creating a hybrid population with many biological, cultural, and linguistic influences. Papiamentu, the much-loved native language

developed from this mix—a melodic potpourri of Spanish, Portuguese, African, Arawak, and Dutch. By 1863, the last of the “pure blooded” Indians had been absorbed into the population; and in the ensuing decades, so too were many of the 758 newly manumitted African slaves (although many Arubians still deny this).

Aruba has had a difficult economic history. Before the twentieth century, its parched landscape was dotted with *cunucus* (farmsteads) and simple cottages built from mud and cactus stems. Sparsely populated, the island’s few families grew maize and kept small kitchen gardens protected by goats and sheep by stone walls and cactus fences. Scarce rainwater was caught in barrels or earthen reservoirs. Economic activity was limited, and erratic and endemic poverty eventually forced men into wage labor on the plantations of Venezuela, Colombia, and Cuba.³ With little industry and an unforgiving climate, the Arubians were increasingly dependent on the outside world (Hartog 1961).

In 1928, the American Lago Oil and Transport Company established a large refinery on the southern tip of the island near the small village of San Nicolas.⁴ This began a new era of infrastructure growth, prosperity, and an end to hardship for the Arubians. This was also the beginning of the Americanization of Aruba and the increasingly complex question of indigenous identity.

NATIVES, ENGLISH, AND EMIGRES

The oil industry radically affected the island’s environment and cultural composition over a remarkably short period of time. In 1900, the population stood at 9,702; by 1951, Aruba boasted a thriving community of 53,000 people (Hartog 1961). Today, the islanders fall into three main groups: native Arubians, Afro-Arubians, and Emigre Arubians (Razak 1998a).

The Natives

The native Arubians are those who are descended from the original founding families of the Dutch and Iberian settlers, Sephardic Jews from Curacao, and other West European migrants who arrived in Aruba in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This group has retained the pattern of endogamous marriage through the Sephardic tradition of cross or parallel cousin marriage. The Sephardics converted to Catholicism through marriage with Latin Americans; this reflected an interest in establishing and securing commercial relations with Venezuela. Another reason may have been to mark themselves off from the Curacaon Sephardics who retained the Jewish faith, and from the Protestant Dutch on Aruba. The Catholicism of the Arubian mestizo Indian population may have also been an influence.

The eventual sharing of language, religion, sociocultural ties, and an appreciation of relative isolation from Curacao and its Dutch control and focus all served to consolidate these groups into a native Arubian population with an endogamous Sephardic-descendant elite and a mestizo Indian-descendant base (Phalen 1977:218–220). While native Arubians as a whole occupy the median of somatic characteristics, some individuals exhibit higher levels of Indian or African biological traits (Rife 1972). However, emic descriptions of the ideal Arubian specify “light to white skin, sparse freckles, hazel eyes and Auburn hair” (Kalm 1974:79). Nonetheless, most individuals are brown skinned, with dark hair and eyes, resulting from intermarriage between later non-Sephardic nineteenth-century immigrants and the “predominantly Indian, black, and mulatto offspring of the first settlers” (Kalm 1974:78). The white category is reserved for the self-definition of Sephardic-descended elite Arubians.⁵ These comprise a few extended families (the so-called “top ten” founding families of Aruba) who tend to hold dominant positions in government, banking, and commerce and are, regardless of economic status, the social and political elite of Aruba (Kalm 1974:80). This group has also remained relatively socially and culturally segregated from the English and other Afro Arubians who are considered “black” in native terms. After the 1970s, with increasing nationalism and a call for separation from Curacao and increased autonomy from Holland, many native Arubians expressed a concomitant hostility toward Caribbean refinery workers and the emigres.

Who's Native, and Who's Not?

Given the complex biological and cultural identity of the native Arubians, a question much asked on the island is “ken ta Arubiano?” or “who is a real Arubian?” Whether you are native or of foreign descent is still of central importance to many native Arubians (Emerencia 1998, Alofs and Meirkes 1990). This question also presents a conundrum that pervades many aspects of secular life—in politics, in education, in social structures and relationships—and manifests in visual terms through public (Carnival) and semiprivate celebrations. In order to identify who is native and who is not, native Arubians tend to sort individuals into groups within the societal structure according to their degree of Arubianness (Razak 1998b). This is a challenging task given the hybrid disposition of their identity. Further, there are only a few symbols of relative indigeneity that are associated primarily with natives: the native lingua franco Papiamentu, Indian ancestry, old family names, certain foods, the festival of *dera gai* (Arubianized festival of San Juan), and two localized forms of regional music—the tumba and the dande. Although both Papiamentu and the tumba are shared with Bonaire and Curacao, there are small but important differences among

their manifestations in the territories. Native Arubians also claim for themselves an ethos that appears as a set of ideal social behaviors and values embodied in expressive performances.

Based on these criteria, native Arubians order individuals and groups into a status hierarchy according to their distance from themselves. The degree of this proximity is defined by an abundance or deficiency of native characteristics (behavior, language, and somatics). In this way, each group is assigned a position within the social hierarchy, each with some kind of boundary between themselves and others based on certain claimed or ascribed features. Non-native islanders view this native construction of Arubian society with concern because such an ordering of the population establishes a principle of paramouncy for natives, creating exclusive spheres of social, economic, and political practices.

The English

The Lago Oil and Transport Company (USA) established an oil refinery on the southern tip of Aruba in 1928. An initial lack of industrial skills among the Papiamentu-speaking native Arubians and the desire to hire an English-speaking workforce led the company to recruit thousands of foreign laborers from the British Caribbean territories.⁶ Thus, between 1940 and 1950, workers arrived in large numbers from Trinidad, Jamaica, and British Guiana, with smaller numbers from Barbados, Antigua, St. Kitts, St. Vincent, and Grenada. Many of these employees had acquired industrial work skills through British or American corporations on the Panama canal or in the modernizing sugar refining industries. These new immigrants settled in the village of San Nicolas below the smoking chimneys of the refinery. Today, these workers and their descendents are included among the island's Afro-Arubian population, which comprises the so-called "English" from the British Windward islands, Guyana, and the Dutch islands of Saba and St. Eustatius; the "Antilleans," the Dutch-speaking Afro-Antillians from the islands of St. Maarten, Bonaire, and Curacao, and from Suriname; and peoples from the French and Spanish-speaking territories including St. Martin, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and the Dominican Republic.

The Emigres

The emigres are juridically Arubian, comprising primarily the Dutch (*macambas*), Surinamers, East Indians, Lebanese, Ashkenazi Jews, Chinese, and individuals from the rest of the Caribbean and the Dutch Antilles. Apart from the Dutch colonizers, the latter groups came to Aruba in the wake of the establishment of the oil refinery. Since the mid-1980s, other settlers have arrived from Columbia, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Africa. The Spanish-speaking population makes up the largest cohort of recent emigres.

ECONOMIC CHANGE AND THE BIRTH OF ANTAGONISM

The oil industry brought immediate tangible material and economic benefits to the island.⁷ Handicapped by a lack of English, poor timekeeping skills, and work habits geared to the needs of horticulture, the Papiamentto-speaking native Arubians were initially unable to participate in the ensuing economic boom. Although Afro-Caribbeans were excluded from the higher status jobs in the refinery, many took advantage of the vocational and U.S. college-bound programs initiated by Lago. As a result, they prospered economically and educationally compared to native Arubians. Because of these perceived inequalities, native Arubians developed antagonisms toward the English and other outsiders during this period. Moreover, the impact of the oil industry signaled the end of the dominant role of the few native Aruban merchants in the economy, and displaced the dominant cultural influence of Venezuela and the Spanish language with that of the United States and the English language.

However, within a few years, and with improvements in the general level of education, many natives were able to move into the new industry and its supporting service sectors. This provided the native population relief from their dependency on drought-prone subsistence horticulture and the necessary seasonal migration of family members to plantations overseas. Until the most recent waves of immigration (1986–2000), the English occupied the lowest ranks in the social hierarchy of the island, even though they by no means occupied the lowest economically.

When the automation of the refinery, and the dismissal of surplus workers, began in the 1950s, many of the original English workers repatriated to their places of origin.⁸ The few who opted to stay consciously began to integrate socially and culturally with the larger Aruban population through marriages (few) and through music. Others were able to transfer their skills into the Aruban economy by starting businesses, joining Aruban-owned firms, and by entering the growing tourism industry—today the major engine of economic development on Aruba.

Overall, the residual “English” (i.e., the descendants of the original oil-workers) in Aruba are relatively skilled and educated. Many are professionals, and several occupy quite senior public positions, and each major political party lists Afro-Aruban candidates. This group is well-versed in Caribbean history and politics, and is keenly aware of its reduced numbers and sometimes-less-than-welcome status in higher social circles. Minimally educated English and other new immigrants from the English-speaking islands tend to occupy less menial positions than immigrants from other islands. But native Arubians have

retained control of the tourist industry, and have consciously “Arubian-faced” the hotels intentionally by bringing in Costa Ricans, Filipinos, and others “that look like them” (Cole 1994), and a greater number from Columbia, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic—another source of resentment for the English.

CARNIVAL IN ARUBA

The continuing high level of immigration (today the population stands at well over 100,000, representing seventy-nine nationalities and ten languages) has brought music and customs from various regions, some of which are liberally peppered throughout the Carnival. Thus the festival, which is still strongly based on the Trinidad model, has become an amalgam of local customs and practices, and elements absorbed from other carnivals—most notably those of Venezuela, Brazil, Holland, and New Orleans. Although several ethnic groups have contributed to the festival in different ways, it is the native Arubian elite and the first generation Trinidadians who have shaped the Carnival.⁹

The first era of Carnival spanned the period 1921 to 1944 and consisted of private indoor European-style carnival parties in and around Oranjestad. The social elite also held European-style balls, debutante balls for the daughters of Aruba's most prominent families (until the 1950s), Halloween, Christmas, and New Year parties, and participated in public street parades to celebrate the Dutch Royal family's coronations and birthdays. Native familiarity with masquerade parties and street parades allowed the Trinidad Carnival to be adopted so easily and enthusiastically. An elite native Arubian social club, the Aruba Tivoli, held (and continues to do so) European-style carnival parties in which members wore costumes representing Pierrots, Sailors, Arabs, ballet dancers, conquistadors, pirates, matadors, African kings, old hags, Mexicans, Mariachis, cowboys and Indians, and Chinese Mandarins. From 1946, the Tivoli *carnavalistas* rode through the streets on floats fashioned into flower gardens, giant swans, and the like, accompanied by *conjuntos* (folkloric music bands).

The Tivoli once held a formal elite ball called the *Luhoso* or Lux Ball, on the eve of the grand Carnival parade in Oranjestad. It was such an elegant affair that the public would stand outside the club just to watch the guests as they arrived in their sumptuous costumes. Guests danced throughout the night and flirted behind their masks and played jokes upon one another in the tradition of the French and New Orleans elite carnival balls of the nineteenth century (Hill 1972; Orloff 1981; Kinser 1990). On this night also, the Dutch governor or the commander of the Dutch marines crowned the Tivoli Carnival Queen-elect.

The second era or sphere of festival activity took place between 1944 and 1954 in the oil town of San Nicolas. During the Christmas period of 1944–



Trinidadians bring their Carnival to Aruba (ca. 1957). From the author's collection.

1945, a group of Trinidadians, accompanied by music, paraded in public in San Nicolas.¹⁰ Some native Arubians were somewhat shocked by this “noisy rabble” and referred to the Trinidadians as “a bunch of monkeys”—a taunt that has never been forgotten. But in the following year, 1946, the Tivoli Club itself took its private Carnival celebrations onto the streets of Oranjestad for the first time. In February 1947, a group of Trinidadians obtained permission and again held a public Carnival parade in San Nicolas:

We had a little group that we confined to San Nicolas. It wasn't something elaborate; it was just to keep up the tradition of Carnival that we knew. A lot of elderly people helped sew the costumes, and we passed in the streets in front of their houses so they could see their work. The costume was “Arab Sheiks.” They were cheap, but colorful—yellow, black, red—and each Arab had a sword. To us we were just duplicating a group very common in the Trinidad Carnival. (Mas leader Calvin Assang, Aruba, April 13, 1991)

In 1949, the Tivoli Club again paraded in the streets of Oranjestad and chose a Carnival queen.¹¹ By 1951, district and social clubs all over the island were holding regional Carnival parties and queen elections.¹² Aruba had developed Carnival fever.

The third era of the Arubian Carnival began at the end of 1954 when the native Arubian and English groups joined to organize an island-wide Carnival. The Aruba Tivoli Club began the drive toward the realization of an organized public Carnival with the following announcement made on November 10, 1954:

Carnival 1955! That is our immediate goal! Allow us to inform you of a wonderful plan, in a few words: Forming a committee to further carnival celebrations at our individual clubs and possibly throughout Aruba.

The response was immediate and enthusiastic, and by the end of that year, representatives of several native Arubian, English, and other Afro-Caribbean social clubs and associations agreed to coordinate their efforts towards a single grand Carnival parade in Oranjestad.¹³ In February 1955, the newly established Central Carnival Committee of Aruba organized the first coordinated public Carnival on Aruba. Out of 120 contestants island-wide, the first official carnival queen, Eveline Croes of the Tivoli, was crowned in San Nicolas. However, because San Nicolas residents boisterously contested the election outcome (too boisterously for the conservative native Arubians), the election final was moved to Oranjestad the following year, where it has remained ever since. It was this incident that instigated the custom (beginning in 1957) of having two Grand Parades—one in San Nicolas and one in Oranjestad, and began the long-standing Carnival rivalry between the two towns. In 1964 calypso and roadmarch music became a part of the Carnival season when the calypso competitions and the titles of Calypsonian and Roadmarch King or Queen were introduced. In 1966, the present Carnival committee was formed—Stitching Arubaanse Carnival (SAC).

When Lago downsized in the 1950s and 1960s, the resulting repatriation robbed the San Nicolas Carnival of its most important and committed English mas players. After their departure, the control over the development of the Carnival passed wholesale into the hands of the native Arubian middle class, with the dominant participation of the Tivoli. Since the beginning, and throughout the ensuing years, the role of the Tivoli has been indispensable to the Carnival's success. In 1994, the Tivoli's pride in its achievements was evidenced in its Carnival program:

Forty years ago carnival was celebrated for the first in Aruba at the Tivoli Club and as such our club is proud to be the place of birth of carnival in Aruba . . . In Tivoli carnival blood runs in the veins of the youngsters but certainly also in those who over 40 years ago initiated carnival in Aruba. (Tivoli Club Program 1994)

Today's Carnival still embodies the distinct cultural styles of both the Trinidadians and the native Arubians, a dichotomy revealed through the perfor-

mance of music, events, and languages that counter one another (for example, the calypso versus tumba, Jouvert Morning versus Cocoyoco Jam, and English versus Papiamentu). But the most important factors shaping the festival today are the issues of native versus alien island identities. The kinship structure of the native Arubians provides the basis of the strong social and economic networks that have consistently and efficiently managed and supported the Carnival. However, under their competitive patronage the carnival has become a largely spectator event. Their larger and ever more luxurious costumes and road pieces have long discouraged any truly spontaneous or broad public participation.

PRINCIPAL CARNIVAL ACTORS

The Carnival season in Aruba revolves around a set of principal actors: the King or Spirit of Carnival, Momo; his Queen of Carnival, her Prince of Carnival and his Fool, Pancho. Also important, and responsible for the music that rouses the spirit of Carnival from his sleep, are the kings and queens of calypso, tumba, and roadmarch. The central figure of the Carnival is the Carnival Queen. She presides over the season and leads all the street parades, making public appearances that promote the Carnival and representing Aruba at home and abroad during the year of her reign. The format of the elections is based on the early Tivoli Club celebrations and on those of the New Orleans Mardi Gras.¹⁴ SAC organizes the district Carnival queen elections while social and sport clubs arrange their own. Large amounts of money are invested in these elections; districts and clubs are particularly competitive in trying to outdo each other in costume design and construction, presentation show, and their ability to rally community support. Support means a large group of family, friends and community supporters, all wearing tee-shirts printed with the candidate's picture, a hired brassband, self-advertising posters, sirens and other noisemakers, balloons, and costumes for her stage-show dancers who are part of a candidate's self-presentation to the judges.

The King or Spirit of Carnival is Momo (Papiamentu *popchi disfrasa*: a disguised doll) derived from the Greek god of censure and mockery, Momus or Momos. The model for Momo comes from Spain's *Rey Momo*. Aruba's Momo appears as a gaudily dressed effigy with a painted mustached face, a glittering rag-a-tag assortment of clothing, and a golden crown upon his head. To mark the end of Momo's reign over the season of excess and indulgence, he is symbolically put to death. This is called the "burning of Momo," or in traditional European phraseology, "burying the carnival" (Frazer 1959). The custom of putting kings to death at the end of a set term has prevailed throughout history in many lands and has long been a central feature of carnivals. Burning, drowning, ston-

ing, or decapitation (Frazer 1959) carries out the burlesque death. On Aruba, Momo is paraded through the streets and taken to a public stadium. There at midnight, he is tied to a tall pole and set alight by the Queen and her royal court. As the flames envelop him, Momo (packed with firecrackers), explodes violently, sending a shower of sparks into the sky. It is the dying embers of his pyre that symbolizes the cooling down of the island at the close of the “hot season.”

Aruba's Prince of Carnival is modeled on the Carnival Prince from the south of Holland (formerly a part of Catholic Spain). The role of the Prince is to present his Queen to the people on her election, and to accompany her wherever she appears. The reign of the royal court officially begins when the prime minister hands over the keys to the island to the Prince of Carnival. This takes place at a televised public ceremony in front of the government building. On this occasion, the Prince reads a proclamation that outlines the new rules by which his citizens will be governed for the festival season. The Prince takes this opportunity to vent the Arubian peoples' opinions on a range of subjects, but with some limits of propriety. Government officials and their deeds are rudely lampooned to the delight of all Arubians.

Pancho is the Prince's sidekick; his role is to tell jokes and to accompany the Prince in all his royal functions. The character of Pancho originates from the Fool of the European festivals of old. The sobriquets that the Prince and his Fool devise for themselves derive from common phrases, which they split and combine in playful ways. For example, there are Prince Bud and Pancho Weiser; Prince Dollar and Pancho Rent-a-Car; Prince Gordo (fat) and Pancho Flaco (skinny); Prince Lenga (tell) and Pancho Largo (tale). The name *Pancho* was adopted from Aruba's first Carnival Fool, who chose to use his nickname as part of his sobriquet, “Pancho Morris.” Prince and Pancho competitions in Aruba play off the legendary qualities of the fools. The pair performs a comedy routine in which they must demonstrate their mastery over buffoonery and wit—essential qualities for holding such important positions in the royal court. Scoring is based on originality, comedy, educational content, personality, and audience popularity. Candidates who use bad or vulgar language will be disqualified, and occasionally they are.

The emcee, or master of ceremonies, is chosen for his or her knowledge of local issues and popularity within all communities. Roger Abrahams (1983) identifies the emcee as a verbal trickster, or in West Indian celebrations, as a “man o' words.” Like the calypsonian, he gets away with saying what others cannot say without fear of retribution. The popular emcees currently active in Aruba (2003) are Reuben “Scorpio” Garcia and Juby Naar. Both have an intimate knowledge of social and political life in their country, and both are welcome in many doors. Because of the small size of Arubian society, however, they

do not take too many liberties with the goodwill of the community. In this way, they remain popular and effective in their roles. Scorpio has a popular radio program that runs throughout the Carnival season. Through his daily broadcasts, he keeps everyone informed about the myriad events that are taking place all over the island. He conducts on-air interviews with popular musicians and would-be queens, and of course, dispenses all the latest carnival gossip (and there's lots of it) with great relish and wit.

CARNIVAL MUSIC IN ARUBA

The music that accompanied the first Tivoli Club Carnival parades of the 1940s was performed by small groups of musicians or *conhuntos*. Costumed Tivoli members rode on decorated floats together with conhuntos that played folkloric or *tipico* music such as the waltz, tumba,¹⁵ meringue, danza, and mazurka. The Trinidadians introduced the calypso into the festival complex in 1964. It transplanted well, partly because it was similar in some respects to the local music of the tumba, the tambu, and the dande, in the sense that these genres also embodied social commentary.

The steelband was also a part of the Aruba Carnival from the beginning. Trinidadian Leonard "Shoo-Shoo Baby" Turner introduced the steelband into the oil refinery town of San Nicolas in 1945.¹⁶ Since the 1960s, Carnival has also danced to the beat of the Arubian brassband music known as *Asambeho*.¹⁷ Traditional brassband music had been played on Aruba since 1930 but was not considered well suited for dancing in the parades.¹⁸ Two San Nicolas musicians, Arnold Beyde and his colleague Samuel Hodge, experimented with different rhythms to develop a sound for the brassband that would provide a fitting musical accompaniment for jump-ups and parades. Blending samba, calypso, and marching band music, they created a new sound with a rhythm and beat suitable for dancing. The melody of the *Asambeho* is carried by wind instruments—the trumpet, trombone, and saxophone, while the beat is carried by a bass drum, a light drum, and a snare drum. The infectious music made its Carnival debut in 1967 and was soon embraced by Arubians of all ethnicities as an integrative symbol of national identity.

Musical road bands riding on flatbed trucks (belching toxic diesel fumes) became popular in the 1960s. Unlike the pan men who had to travel on foot and take regular rest stops, the mobile roadbands could play for much longer periods. And, with their electric instruments and giant speakers, they could also play much louder. This development contributed to the decline of the steelbands in the 1980s. It can be linked also to the unsuccessful attempt to merge the steelband music with the Latin American rhythms so favored by native Arubians.

Today, the roadbands dominate the parades, together with the popular Asambeho drum and brass bands. The disco vans with their disc jockeys, sound systems, and taped soca roadmarch music are also common—mainly because they are much cheaper to hire for the less affluent carnivalistas.

After taking root, the Trinidad calypso was subjected to local cultural influences. However, its integral elements have been retained—including the convention that singers should adopt sobriquets like Mighty Spoiler, Lord Melody, and Mighty Sparrow, which have continued in Aruba with names such as Lord Cobashi, King Paul, Lord Boxoe, Mighty Talent, Mighty Gold Teeth, and Lord Cachete. In line with its origins, the Arubian calypso pokes fun at local figures and national politicians. It is still the unofficial voice of the people, expressing social, economic, and political concerns through wit, words, and music in both serious and comedic ways. The ability of the Arubian Calypsonian to sing extemporaneously is admired and appreciated as it is in Trinidad. Although no true *picon* tradition has ever existed in Aruba, Calypsonians frequently mock or respond to each other in song. For example, this is the response of Mighty Talent to Mighty Hippy's boasting calypso in which he (Hippy) compared the size of their respective anatomies and sexual prowess with women, while brandishing beef sausages of varying sizes at the audience:

Now Mighty Hippy won't you please tell me
There's one thing I don't understand
The only way you would know how my hot-dog go 'Cause you are playing
with it in your hand!

You like the sauce, hmmm . . . finger lickin' good
The secret's out now
Hippy, publicize you never should
People asking who's the boss. He tell you,
Talent is the man with the pepper sauce! (Excerpt from the calypso "We" by
Claudius "Mighty Talent" Phillips, 1993)

In the ethnically diverse environment of Aruba, the calypso is a dynamic art form, absorbing lexical items from other language groups on Aruba, notably from Spanish, Dutch, and Papiamentu. With the increasing social and professional integration of the island's musicians, and the fact that the new generation of calypso singers is island born, there is some tension between the first and second generation of English calypsonians, and between these groups and the native Arubian singers who try their hand at the English calypso. The Arubian calypso is being shaped by these contradictions and influences and by other music genres inside and outside the island.¹⁹

The feelin' is not there. If the natives sing tumba, the feeling is there because it's in their native tongue, Papiamentu. They would not fully understand what the real Trinidadians sing, because of the expressions. Calypso is tongue, it's the accent, the way of "pronunciatin" the words. (Lord Cobashi, Aruba, February 26, 1992)

In recent years, the Arubian calypso has become more Latinized under the cultural influence of the native Arubian musicians, despite the resistance of some older, traditionally inclined calypsonians. Innovation is discouraged through the application of strict rules for performance in the calypsonian competitions. These include the correct accent, palate, and feeling standards that are impossible to attain for Papiamentu speakers. This is not to say that there are any serious rifts between musicians; on the contrary, the island's musicians are well integrated, and in turn integrate the Arubian society as a whole through a shared love of Caribbean and Latin rhythms. However, music cannot be prevented from innovation and development over the longer term and is always a reflection of the altering sociocultural environment. Because Arubian society has changed significantly since the 1930s, the island's music has similarly undergone transformations. With respect to Arubian calypso, for example, popular second-generation calypso composer Claudius Phillips infuses his lyrics with a mix of English, Spanish, Papiamentu, and Dutch, reflecting the island's diverse ethnicities. He incorporates traditional instruments into his compositions, such as the Indian *calco* and *wiri*, while consciously maintaining the traditional function and structure of his calypsos as a reflection of his own British West Indian cultural heritage. But as a product of two cultural spheres of influence, Phillips is attuned to the music of both worlds. While responding through song to the contemporary political, economic, and social problems around him on Aruba, his music also reflects his own generation's mixed aesthetic of cross-cultural music flows and languages:

Aids it don't care if it's he or she
 So you women please beware
 and you men use a *handschoen* down there²⁰
 On every local radio
 In Courant and Diario
 You read about the same old crime
*Muher a worde viola*²¹
*Menor di edad abusa*²²
 Can we solve this problem in time
 These dirty men putting us to shame
 Give Aruba a nasty name
 If they feeling so damn horny
 Let they go spend they money in some *hanchi*²³
 It's a shame to be out raping
 It's a shame, please stop child molesting.
 All this crime go me in shock
 If I was judge I cut off their _____

(Phillips 1991)



Representing "native" culture and history in the Aruba Carnival. From the author's collection.

In the above calypso, Phillips includes other commonly used languages: Spanish, Papiamentu, and Dutch.

A CHANGING AESTHETIC: NATIVIZATION OF THE ARUBA CARNIVAL

After fifty years of innovation and change, few of the events and masquerades that originated in Trinidad have any meaningful connections to their antecedents for native Arubians; neither do they have much meaning for second-generation English. But they have been maintained for a variety of reasons. The most common of these is that they were already familiar fare in the private Carnival festivities of the native Aruban social clubs before 1944; were in tune with local aesthetic taste; or were simple to replicate and inexpensive to produce. The masquerades that still follow the Trinidad model are the Historical, Original, Luxurious, or Fantasy masquerades. These include African tribes; Indians (Fancy, Indigenous, North American); the big bands that depict Historic themes and popular Hollywood films, Sailorboys and Combat groups; and Bats, the Devil, Pirates, Midnight Robbers, and Mavis Clowns. For the older English

players, each of these masquerades once embodied a semantic complex and incorporated a characteristic dance or pantomime. However, all of these events and masquerades have been subjected to a native reinterpretation of form and meaning since their introduction.

The native aesthetic sensibility has long looked toward Brazil as a model for many of the luxurious road pieces. A strong affinity with all things American has imparted a Disney World feel into costumes, especially in the children's parades. The comedy is decidedly a "Dutch thing," but elaborated and localized with much talent by native Arubians. Historical bands from a 1950s Trinidad are used to elaborate and re-present local and regional history. In addition to depicting events from the distant past, most notably *The Conquest of the Americas* (1992), the recent Arubian past is portrayed in critical terms. In particular, after the abrupt closure of the Lago Oil refinery in 1985, the carnival brings together themes that include the nostalgic: *Aruba before Lago*, and the optimistic *Our Brilliant Future*. The Status Aparte²⁴ relationship with Holland, achieved in 1986, resulted in several carnival groups bearing celebratory neonationalistic themes such as *Star of Status Aparte*, *Aruba Our Paradise*, *The Sky is the Limit*, *Shield and Flag*, and *New Aruba*.

The Indian masquerade has also been enthusiastically adopted from twentieth-century Trinidad, but rather as a potent visual symbol of Arubian Indian ancestry. The groups creatively explore, redefine, or reinvent their Indian heritage through serious or playful frames. Whereas the shared native American and African experience of New World colonialism and enslavement is sympathetically linked in the aesthetics of the costuming in some Trinidad masquerades (Hill 1972, Kinser 1990), in Aruba, the notion of "Indian" is loaded with local connotations alluding to political power, social status, class structure, and relative indigeneity. As part of the separation movement from the Netherlands Antilles in the 1970s, the Arubians began to re-evaluate the term *Indian* as a positive mark of social status and as a means of differentiating themselves from the rest of the Dutch Antilles, especially from Curacao whose population is mainly of African descent. Thus, in some of these masquerades, direct representation is made to the Jirajara and Caiquetio Arawak ancestors of the present native population. This representation occurs most frequently in the folkloric Carnival parade in Noord and in the Caribe Club group theme (every five years the Caribe Club celebrates its lustrum by entering the Oranjestad Grand Carnival parade with their signature theme *Original Indians*, led by a cacique [big chief] and the Caribe Queen.)

The insistence on the inclusion of symbols that are native rather than imported alludes to the process of appropriation, the continuing loss of native tradition, high immigration, and rapid social and cultural changes. After 1970,

concerned about the dearth of native Arubian elements in the Carnival, SAC president Milo Croes encouraged masquerade groups to “portray things that are Arubian.” In response, each new Carnival season brings myriad themes celebrating the island’s traditions, for example, *Casamento di Antanjo* (old-time marriage) and *Nos Cultura* (our culture). The cultural institute in Oranjestad is similarly concerned with the maintenance of Aruba’s cultural heritage and identity and believes it can help achieve this goal by sponsoring Carnival groups that educate the public about the island’s social history. These carnivalesque enactments of the past, however, “exist somewhere between history and fiction” (Schechner 1985:38), this is because Arubian history, as told in performance, has been retold and reshaped through idealization and elaboration with aspects selectively included or excluded.

In addition to the calypso, roadmarch, steelband, and Jouvert Morning, and the already mentioned masquerades, other Carnival themes were created and added to the festivities by Arubians. These include the *tipico* and *comico* masquerade groups, the Tivoli Lighting Parade, and the Cocoyoco “Rooster” Jam. The *tipico* masquerades are often heuristic in nature, and deployed partly to show outsiders the “real” Aruba, partly to differentiate between insiders and outsiders, and partly to warn the younger generation that they are losing their cultural values and customs. *Tipico* groups often mobilize symbols of an idealized agricultural past with the island’s natural surroundings providing a source of inspiration for costumes. Birds such as the *troupial* and *chuchubi*, local fish and insects, the tall *cadushi* cactus, the low-lying aloe plant, the natural bridge, and the vast rock formations with their Indian paintings have all inspired road and body pieces from the mundane to the spectacular.

These representations of place allude to a sense of “belongin” among native Arubians that relates to both legal and emotional (but not necessarily nurturing) ties to the land. A common assertion is that if your ancestors owned a piece of farmland, or *cunucu*, then you are the descendant of a “real” Arubian family. For most natives, the *cunucu* resonates with emotion; an ancient place associated with Indian origins, myths, and autonomy. Thinking about and using the land in the mode of the past helps Arubians achieve a profound sense of community. Although traditional farming activities have all but ceased, the old *cunucus* with their characteristic cactus fences are still maintained and valued as symbols of indigeneity. Traditional *cunucu* houses are often featured in the parades despite the enormous amount of work that goes into building them. Traditional aloe farming equipment is also displayed in the main parades. Popular folkloric festivities such as *dera gai* (San Juan)²⁵ and the native *dande* music (New Year celebration in which a group of musicians visit the homes of relatives and friends with a gift of song) are also presented in carnivalesque style.

As with most carnivals, Aruba has several comic groups that participate each year. The central focus of Carnival is humor that stems from the transgression and mockery of valid laws and normative social behaviors (Sebeok 1984). The native *comico* groups who turn the Carnival into a vaudeville theater of the streets exemplify this phenomenon. Their humor is direct, stinging, and political. Nothing escapes their satirical scrutiny—including the politicians, the police, the Carnival committee, and the tourists. They take their themes from local gossip, topical local news, and international issues, presenting them as theatrical set pieces to be told and retold as the parade progresses through the streets. Interaction with spectators is essential to a successful performance. Spectators are routinely invited to participate and play some role in the performance, much to the amusement of the onlookers. But the *comico* groups comprise insiders talking to insiders (in Papiamentu), so you have to know the language, and be a local resident, to understand the jokes.

The spectacular nighttime Lighting Parade (formerly the Tivoli) is a major tourist attraction on the Carnival calendar of events and takes place in Oranjestad one week before the grand parade. This event epitomizes the conspicuous spending that has become associated with the middle- and upper-class players of Aruba. Tivoli members (in particular) invest a good deal of time, money, and effort into their costumes. They carefully research their themes, make detailed working drawings, and often produce scaled-down prototypes for testing. The level of financial investment, artistry, and craftsmanship in these masquerades is impressive. Influenced by the Walt Disney World light parades in Orlando, the Lighting Parade is famed for its sumptuous fairy light-covered costumes that give the parade its unique ambiance. The designers experiment with different lighting effects—including the use of neon paint, colored lights powered by small generators or batteries, twinkling lights, colored smoke, black light, and laser light. The body costumes are made from reflective materials and are covered with up to five hundred light bulbs. This illumination gives the Lighting Parade a psychedelic, dreamlike quality not easily forgotten. To jump in behind the Lighting Parade is to understand the compelling attraction of Carnival.

Public jump-ups are held all over the island throughout Carnival season. They are essentially street parties with soca bands held on an ad hoc basis that add to the general feverish atmosphere of the island. These street jams are popular with teenagers and are accompanied by plenty of parading, preening, and flirting. The northern town of Noord holds an early morning jump-up known as the Cocoyoco Jam. Held before sunrise on the day of the children's parade in Noord, it is the native Arubian counterpart to the Trinidadian-style Jouvert Morning held a week later in San Nicolas. Noord lies close to the northwest coast of Palm Beach where the majority of the hotels are situated, affording

tourists and visitors to the island a chance to experience a joyful early morning jump-up with Arubian revelers.

Jouvert Morning begins at around four o'clock in the morning on the day of the San Nicolas Grand Parade. This event is the emotional center of Carnival for the English San Nicolarians, and is attended by all serious carnival revelers from other parts of the island. In earlier years, costumes were varied and amusing, including underwear worn as overwear, and jokes or social commentaries displayed on costumes or hand-held signs in the manner of the Trinidadian "ole mas." Today, most participants wear everyday clothes, although some do still practice the custom of wearing pajamas, nightdresses, and shower caps with some cross-dressing.

In 1971, the Carnival committee introduced a tumba contest into the program of competitive events. This was consciously done to balance the festival culturally by showing a native face to the tourists, one that represents and reflects the island's native culture. The custom of dancing to Trinidad-style soca roadmarch music in the parades has been retained, in part, because it serves to differentiate Aruba from Curacao whose own Carnival dances to tumba music. Interestingly, in the ensuing years, the tumba contest has come to serve the same function as the English calypso, that is, as a vehicle for gossip and information. The tumba lyrics (sung in Papiamentu) have become increasingly embellished with sociopolitical satire and a Tumba King or Queen is chosen and crowned in much the same way as the Calypso King or Queen. Thus, the two music genres both complement and oppose one another:

In San Nicolas, the people coming from Trinidad and the English islands had their own way of doing carnival. From them we have the calypso but the tumba is typical Arubian music. It's between a rumba and a meringue, but it has its own sound. We put the tumba into the carnival so we can play our own music. The people feel that the tumba is something of their own, with our own composed songs in our own words. (Milo Croes President, Carnival Committee, May 21, 1991)

The Carnival committee organizes the carnival season rather efficiently and tries to make sure that the more than fifty events are well policed and orderly. The Carnival brings a potential for disorder to the island at a time when the island is at its most vulnerable and at its most open (tourist high season). This generates a public spectacle of harmony and safety that is truly representative of a growing national identity—in fact, the Carnival is an important integrative mechanism for national unity. Both the Arubian government and the island's commercial interests want the carnival to be an orderly and safe affair that the visitor (and potential investor) can enjoy with a sense of security. The successful organization of the festivities, then, metaphorically displays to outsiders the

Arubian's ability to organize, adapt to, and control, the demands of the changing local and outside worlds:

Our carnival is getting a good name. We are also known as the safest carnival in the world. We have no accidents, except one or two collisions, no fighting, no riots, no killing. Drunkenness yes, but just in a very decent way. Once a year they can drink publicly without being jailed, and the police don't arrest them. Even after such a big drinking party, where we have the whole of the population drinking, on Monday morning you won't see one person lying on the street. (Croes 1991)

Thus, Aruba sees itself as distinctive even though its Carnival shares most of the features of other Caribbean carnivals, particularly in the festivals's tendency to reflect the island's social and political structures through their temporary overthrow or their ardent reaffirmation through performance. And, as with other carnivals, the Aruba carnival offers a time and place for individuals, groups, and institutions to confront each other over social, economic, and political interests and actions through competitive challenge. Aruba's Carnival has also taken on a nativistic quality that serves to revitalize local culture and counterbalance the negative impacts of social change.

When the native Arubians formed a Carnival committee and organized the island's first "official" public Carnival in 1955, the Trinidadians of San Nicolas already had their own Carnival committee.²⁶ However, as a heterogeneous community, it lacked the strong kinship structures possessed by the native Arubians, which formed the bases of the social, political, and economic networks necessary for efficient development, management, and financial support of a successful Carnival. Because of this, the English players have long argued that native Arubians stole the Carnival from them at the beginning. This, some claim, has resulted in the erosion of meaning and the loss of authenticity, and any written or oral claims relating to this issue tend to heighten tensions between the two groups. A 1956 Carnival program illustrates an example of this dispute, with an editorial written by a Tivoli Club member:

Tivoli has established that great Tradition of Carnaval in Aruba . . . upholding a tradition set by *themselves*. TIVOLI = The standard of Carnaval. Authors name withheld for the guy's safety. (Anon; Tivoli Club Carnival Program, 1956, Biblioteca Nacional, Aruba)

This self-serving taunt was fueled by a contentious relationship between the two groups, stemming from the fact that the native Arubian refinery workers had been displaced by British West Indians who had greater language and work skills.²⁷ Today, a marked (but less obvious) ethnic and regional dichotomy con-

tinues between the English Afro-Arubians and the natives, and although the island is relatively well integrated with all ethnic groups and social classes working well together, underlying tensions between them still surface from time to time.²⁸

Although Carnival has been well managed by the native middle classes for fifty years, the English still dispute the natives' ability to run the festival.²⁹ Native Arubians strongly disagree with this view and assert that Carnival belongs to the island, that it is a part of Arubian culture—it is “an Arubian thing.” Even the president of the Carnival committee boasts as follows:

Carnival is an Arubian thing. The Tivoli Club started the carnival in their club before the British West Indians came in. The role of the carnival committee is to coordinate the whole carnival so that everything may be orderly . . . they [all participants] have to come through us. We want to make carnival a typical Arubian festival you know, that's why we have to handle it. Now when you say Aruba, you say carnival. We are *isla carnaval* . . . (Milo Croes)

Although specific Trinidad imports did not survive past the 1960s—for example, stickfighting, Moco Jumbies, Devil Bands, Biblical Mas, Flag Women, and wars between rival costume groups and steelbands—these remain in the imagination and are passionately idealized as central to a “real” carnival. For the English players, these were authentic and exemplary models of, and for, Caribbean Carnival. Surviving masquerades, such as Sailorboy and Military groups, Amerindian and African masquerades, and large Original or Historical groups survived transplantation from Trinidad for different reasons. Either they were (in some form) extant in native social club celebrations, or they thrived because they were able to be successfully recoded with local meanings.

For the aged Trinidadian players, the reglossing in native Arubian terms has (for them) caused the loss of meaningful historic context, authenticity, and the embodied symbols these themes once generated. Gone are the narrative frames, the accompanying costume paraphernalia, and the characteristic dance steps that were associated with different Carnival characters. Today, the numbers of these original mas players are few, but their adult children and more recent English immigrants keep the contentious relationship alive (in part because of their marginal social position). They assert that the natives are “nibbling around the edges” of what is left of their original Carnival. Certainly there is a sense that Arubians would love to move everything up to the capital, and San Nicolonians say they are definitely fighting to “hang on” to their Calypso contest—especially since the native-Arubian town of Noord introduced their own version of Jouvert Morning—the Cocoyoco Jam. Many saw this as a hostile act. The establishment and location of a Carnival museum and theater are causing the most

current antagonisms. Both San Nicolas and Oranjestad claim the right to locate the museum in their vicinity. No doubt, as past clashes have shown, Aruba will end up with two Carnival museums.

The continuing argument over the management and authenticity of Carnival is today fueled in part by the English and Afro-Arubians' relative social marginalization in a society where they are still referred to as "outsiders." Thus, despite the angst over the past and the contradictory claims over the festival's genesis, the continuing competitive nature of the festival is fueled by real social and economic inequalities. Aruba sees its Carnival as unique even though the festival shares most of the features of other Caribbean carnivals, particularly in its tendency to reflect the island's social and political structures through their temporary overthrow or their ardent reaffirmation through performance. And like other carnivals, Aruba's bacchanal has taken on a nativistic quality that serves to revitalize local culture and counterbalance the negative impacts of social change. It offers a time and place for individuals, groups, and institutions to confront each other over social, economic, and political interests and actions through competitive challenge (Manning 1977, 1984, 1990).

The birth and development of Aruba's Carnival provides insights into the history of relations between ethnic groups and social classes, between tradition and change, and between the local and the global. The distinct and primary focus of Aruba's bacchanal, however, is the continuing dichotomous discourse generated at its twinned birth that brings a dynamic subtext to the festival in the form of a power struggle for control over its future. However muted today, the question of "Whose Carnival is it anyway?" remains a potent issue and provides the Carnival with its festive dynamic and local identity. Paradoxically, however, although playing Carnival involves the assertion of individual and group identities, it also serves as an integrative social mechanism for the population as a whole. To play Carnival in Aruba is to feel Arubian, to belong. This sense of belonging is attained through play.

NOTES

1. The range of events that take place during Carnival varies from year to year, with new ones being added that may or may not become a permanent part of the celebrations (Jeep Parade, Costumed Roller Blades Parade, and Horse Parade, for example). But of the more than fifty contests and entertainments, several core events take place each Carnival season: costumed street parades, jump-ups in all barrios; grand all-comers Carnival parades in Oranjestad and San Nicolas; the Noord children's parade; and the grand children's carnival parades of Oranjestad and San Nicolas. The International Carnival Costume Festival takes place in Oranjestad with several regional carnivals participating, for

example, from Aruba, Brazil, Jamaica, Santo Domingo, St. Maarten, Tenerife, and Trinidad. There are also Old Mask parades in the major towns, including Noord, San Nicolas, Santa Cruz, and Savaneta, but these appear not to differ from other jump-ups. Jouvert Morning (also known as the Pajama Parade) takes place in San Nicolas, with its native northern counterpart, the Cocoyoco “Rooster” Jam, in Noord. The Calypso Festival and competition take place in San Nicolas, as do the roadmarch and Calypso King and Queen competitions, and the Jubu Happening where the island’s most popular musicians perform and are honored by the San Nicolas community with the title of *e cantante di pueblo* (the people’s singer). The tumba festival is held in Oranjestad and elects the island’s tumba king or queen. The Brassband Jamboree is also held in Oranjestad. The Steelband competitions used to take place in San Nicolas but have not been held since the 1980s. The transfer of command by the prime minister of Aruba to the Prince of Carnival takes place at government house in Oranjestad. The Prince’s motorized parade circles the entire island, passing through its main towns. Queen competitions occur in all barrios, as do Prince and Pancho competitions. The Mrs. Carnival takes place in Oranjestad.

2. The phrase is attributed to Carnival committee president, Milo Croes.

3. The gathering of cochineal and tannin, straw hat plaiting, and fishing all helped to sustain the people at one time or another over the centuries. Aloe grew well in the arid conditions, and small but ubiquitous aloe plantations were dotted around the island. A few deposits of phosphate and gold were discovered that provided income for some people until the beginning of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the Arubians still suffered from periods of famine and near-starvation.

4. Lago Oil and Transport Company later affiliated with the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, which subsequently became the Exxon Corporation. Today Coastal Corporation owns the refinery.

5. Even though the native Aruban elite assert that their white ancestry and endogamous marriage patterns set them apart from others, even these prominent families absorbed Indian blood. Records support this assumption, noting that in 1806 there were 256 heads of families in Aruba comprising 60 whites, 141 Indians, 10 mulattos, 35 lighter skinned admixtures, and 7 black. But by 1868, white heads of household had diminished to a mere 1.5 percent of the population (Hartog 1961:111).

6. The Lago oil refinery employed 2,074 British West Indians between 1930 and 1951.

7. During its peak in World War II, the Lago Oil and Transport Company was the world’s largest refinery, producing aviation fuel for the allied forces, refining some 440,000 barrels per day, and employing some 8,300 workers (Green 1974:24).

8. Direct employment at the plant declined from 8,300 in 1949 to 5100 in 1960, 1,600 in 1972, and 1,000 in 1984, just before the closing (DECO 1984:17).

9. Dutch was only spoken by educated Arubians, and then only in conversation with the Dutch.

10. A two-page account of the Carnival’s origins (“Carnival on Aruba” (Figaroa et al., n.d., National Library) reports that the Carnival dates back to 1939 when Trinidadians established it in San Nicolas. The first masmen, among others, were Calvin Assang, Elric Crichlow, Robert Murray, William “Woody” Woodley, Adolpho “Chippy” Richardson, and “Shakey” and “Tremble” Welch.

11. *Aruba Esso News* (February 22, 1949).

12. *The Aruba Esso News* reports that in February 1951, the Surinam Club sponsored a carnival in San Nicolas, and in March 1952 groups from the French islands of Martinique and St. Martin gathered for a French-style carnival at the Netherlands Windward Islands Club.

13. A meeting was held on November 23rd at the club to form a central committee to organize the Carnival celebrations. Aruba Tivoli Club member G. A. Oduber presided over this meeting in which seven of the twenty eight clubs invited were present. A temporary Aruba Carnival committee was formed, chaired by Oduber, with six male committee members: N. E. Henriquez, Jr. (Rotary Club of Aruba) was appointed secretary, A. A. Harms (Caribe Sport Club), Frans Croes (Santa Cruz Social Club), a Mr. Panne-flek (Netherlands Windward Islands Association), a Mr. de Kort (Commandeursbaai Club), and Harold Harms (American Legion). Committee members resolved to invite other clubs and associations to participate. Included were Watapana, Lucky Strike, T.C.C., Trappers, Golden Rock Club, Chinese Club, Lago Heights Club, Pova, Lions, Palm Beach Club, and the Country Club.

14. Carnival Queen elections in New Orleans are associated with debutante balls and coming out parties in which the daughters of the social elite are formally introduced into society. Rex, New Orleans's Mardi Gras King, was escorted by a Queen for the first time in 1873. The carnival season in New Orleans begins on January 6, with parades and balls. Secret societies called Krewes organize the festivities; the best-known Krewes are Rex and Comus (Roman God of Joy).

15. Tumba is part of the generic rumba complex including macumba and tambo; it is secular party music, with its own style and instrumental formats for interpretation.

16. Trinidadian Leonard Turner, a Lago refinery worker, recruited a group of young men to form a steelband. They crafted pans from Lago oil drums and learned to play increasingly fluent renditions of the sambas, rumbas and other popular music of the day. By 1948, Turner had put together his first professional steel orchestra, the Invaders, which performed at both public and private venues. In 1950, Turner teamed up with San Nicolas resident Naldo Brown to form another steelband, Shoo-Shoo Baby and the Aruba All-Star Boys. "Shoo-Shoo" was Turner's stage name. Naldo Brown eventually took over the group and changed its name to the Aruba All Stars. San Nicolas calypso singer Lord Cobashi sang with this band. One young pan man in the band, Edgar Connor, went on to form his own steelband in 1952, called the Aruba Invaders. The two bands competed against each other in the first Carnival steelbands competition in 1964. Eight steelbands competed: the Merrymakers, the Devils, the Curacao Heroes, the Long Gun Boys, the Paradera Steelband, the Silver Stars, the All-Stars Steelband, and Edgar Connor's, group The Aruba Invaders; the latter won with their rendition of the theme from *Exodus*. By the 1960s, a proliferation of steelbands was providing music for Aruba's Carnival parades, and continued to do so for thirty years. Although the original panmen of the 1950s and 1960s were predominantly of British West Indian descent, today the bands are fully integrated with Arubians of all ethnic origins and cultural backgrounds.

17. The name for this novel music derives from a combination of the authors' names —Arnold SAMuel BEyde Hodge.

18. The formation of the first Arubian brassband took place at the Pan-Am Club, San Nicolas, on March 7, 1930. The Aruba Refinery Brassband contained between twenty and twenty-five musicians. Source: *Pan Aruban* newsletter (February 15, 1930),

weekly mimeo of the Pan American Petroleum Corporation (part shareholders in the Lago Oil and Petroleum company).

19. The Trinidadian calypso has been influenced by Spanish music from Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, some French, Irish, and English music forms, and more recently, East Indian and Chinese melodies.

20. Dutch for *glove*.

21. Papiamentu for *women wait for rape*.

22. Papiamentu for *young ones are abused*.

23. Papiamentu for *alley*.

24. Aruba is no longer part of the Federation of the Netherlands Antilles (with Curacao, Bonaire, St. Maarten, Saba, and St. Eustatius). Aruba opted out of the federation in 1986 and became an independent entity within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Aruba now has its own parliament and council of ministers; the Netherlands remains responsible for Aruba's defense, foreign affairs, and justice.

25. *Dera gai* means "to bury the rooster." The curious custom of burying a rooster and hitting it with a stick three times is associated with two Catholic feast days, those of St. Peter and St. John.

26. Although the Trinidadians accounted for the majority of the mas players along with some Guyanans, the "English" San Nicolas population was rather heterogeneous and included peoples from Jamaica, Grenada, St. Vincent, and Dominica, two of whom later became prime ministers on their home islands (Green 1974).

27. When Vera Green was studying on the island in the 1970s, the social distance between the two groups was still considerable (Green 1974).

28. For example, the hosting of the Calypsonian and Tumba King and Queen contests by San Nicolas and Oranjestad respectively epitomizes the ethnic, linguistic, and regional divisions of the territory.

29. Ironically, in Trinidad too, the Carnival is controlled by middle-class Creole leadership rather than Afro-Trinidadians (J. Stewart 1986).